

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT FOR ARA/EX, ARA/MEX AND SCA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AORG, APER
SUBJ: CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF OFFICER PERSONNEL

1. THIS POST, AS EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT ARE AWARE, HAS REPETEDLY RECOMMENDED RESTORATION OF THE POSITION OF PROTECTION AND WELFARE OFFICER WHICH WAS ONE OF THE THREE OFFICER POSITIONS LOST IN THE SUMMER OF 1975 WHEN THE IMMIGRANT VISA FUNCTION WAS TRANSFERRED TO CONGEN TIJUANA, NOTWITHSTANDING FACT THAT IV WORK ONLY REQUIRED FULL TIME OF ONE OFFICER. JUSTIFICATION HAS BEEN BASED PRIMARILY ON INCREASED VOLUME OF WORK IN ALL OTHER AEREREAS OF THE POSTS ACTIVITIES AS DEMONSTRATED IN THE LAST TWO ANNUAL CONSULAR PACKAGE SUBMISSIONS. A FURTHER SIGNIFICANT REASON FOR RESTORATION OF THIS POSITION HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE THE HEAVY WORKLOAD CONNECTED WITH AMERICAN PRISONERS. AS IS KNOWN, THIS POST HAS THE SECOND LARGEST NUMBER OF AMERICAN PRISONERS IN MEXICO EXCEPT FOR THE EMBASSY.
 2. OFFICER PERSONNEL SHORTAGE HAS BECOME CRITICAL WITH THE DEPARTURE ON TRANSFER NOVEMBER 1 OF THE POST'S THIRD OFFICER. WE UNDERSTAND THAT HIS REPLACEMENT, A NEW OFFICER, IS NOW IN TRAINING, BUT WILL NOT REPORT FOR DUTY UNTIL EARLY 1978. PENDING THE ARRIVAL OF THIS FIRST-TOUR OFFICER, THE POST MUST BE KEPT FUNCTIONING BY THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER AND HIS DEPUTY, ATTEMPTING TO COPE WITH A SUBSTAN
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TIALLY GREATER VOLUME OF WORK THAN WAS FORMERLY CARRIED OUT BY FIVE OFFICERS (AND A SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER LOCAL STAFF).

3. THIS CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF STAFF FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE CAN ONLY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE PERFORMANCE OF THE POST AS A WHOLE AND EVEN THE PHYSICAL WELLBEING OF THE STAFF. IN ADDITION TO LONG HOURS UNDER CONSTANT PRESSURE, THE REMAINING OFFICERS AND

PARTICULARLY THE CONSULAR OFFICER ARE ON ALMOST CONTINUOUS CALL AS NIGHT AND WEEKEND DUTY OFFICER, A CHORE THAT MUST BE SHOULDERED PRIMARILY BY THE CONSULAR OFFICER BECAUSE OF THE FREQUENT REPRESENTATIONAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER.

4. THE PROCESSING FOR EVENTUAL INCLUSION IN PRISONER TRANSFERS OF APPROXIMATELY 30 AMERICAN CITIZENS INCARCERATED IN THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT, HAS REQUIRED AND WILL CONTINUE TO REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME-CONSUMING WORK BY THE POST. THE TRANSFER OF THE FIRST GROUP BEFORE THE END OF 1977 WILL LIGHTEN SOMEWHAT THE PRISONER SERVICES WORK, BUT AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF THE AMCIT PRISONERS IN SONORA WILL REMAIN WITH US AND CONTINUE TO REQUIRE PERIODIC VISITATION AND OTHER SERVICES. WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE WINTER TRAVEL SEASON, THE ANNUAL INCREASE IN CITIZEN SERVICES HAS ALREADY BEEN NOTED. ALSO THECHRISTMAS NIV RUSH WILL BEGIN IN APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS. PEAK PERIODS OF OVER 1200 APPLICANTS DAILY REQUIRE VIRTUALLY FULL TIME OF ONE OFFICER. IN VIEW OF THIS STAFF SITUATION SUCH MINOR REQUESTS FOR SERVICES AS THAT OF MEETING OFFICIAL VISITORS, PARTICULARLY ON WEEKENDS, OR OF PERFORMING EXTRAORDINARY SERVICES OUTSIDE OF THE CONSULATE PREMISES, PLACE ADDITIONAL STRAIN ON OUR REDUCED STAFF.

5. IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT THE OPTIMUM SOLUTION WOULD HAVE BEEN THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE FOURTH OFFICER WE HAVE REQUESTED FOR TWO YEARS AND THE FULL STAFFING OF EXISTING POSITIONS. ALTERNATIVELY, WE HOPE THAT THE EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT WILL KEEP IN MIND THE LIMITED UNCLASSIFIED

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RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT THIS POST TO CARRY OUT MANDATED FUNCTIONS WHEN REQUESTING SPECIAL SERVICES, TO INCLUDE RECOMMENDING THAT TRAVELERS SCHEDULE ARRIVALS DURING THE WORK WEEK. IF SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL CONSULAR ASSISTANCE IS EXPECTED TO BE REQUIRED DURING THE PRISONER TRANSFER PROCESS, SERIOUS CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO THE TDY ASSIGNMENT OF A QUALIFIED OFFICER, EITHER TO ASSIST IN THE TRANSFER OR TO TEMPORARILY RELIEVE OUR EXPERIENCED CONSULAR OFFICER FROM ROUTINE DUTIES SUCH AS NIV ISSUANCE AND CITIZENS SERVICES. SACKSTEDER

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